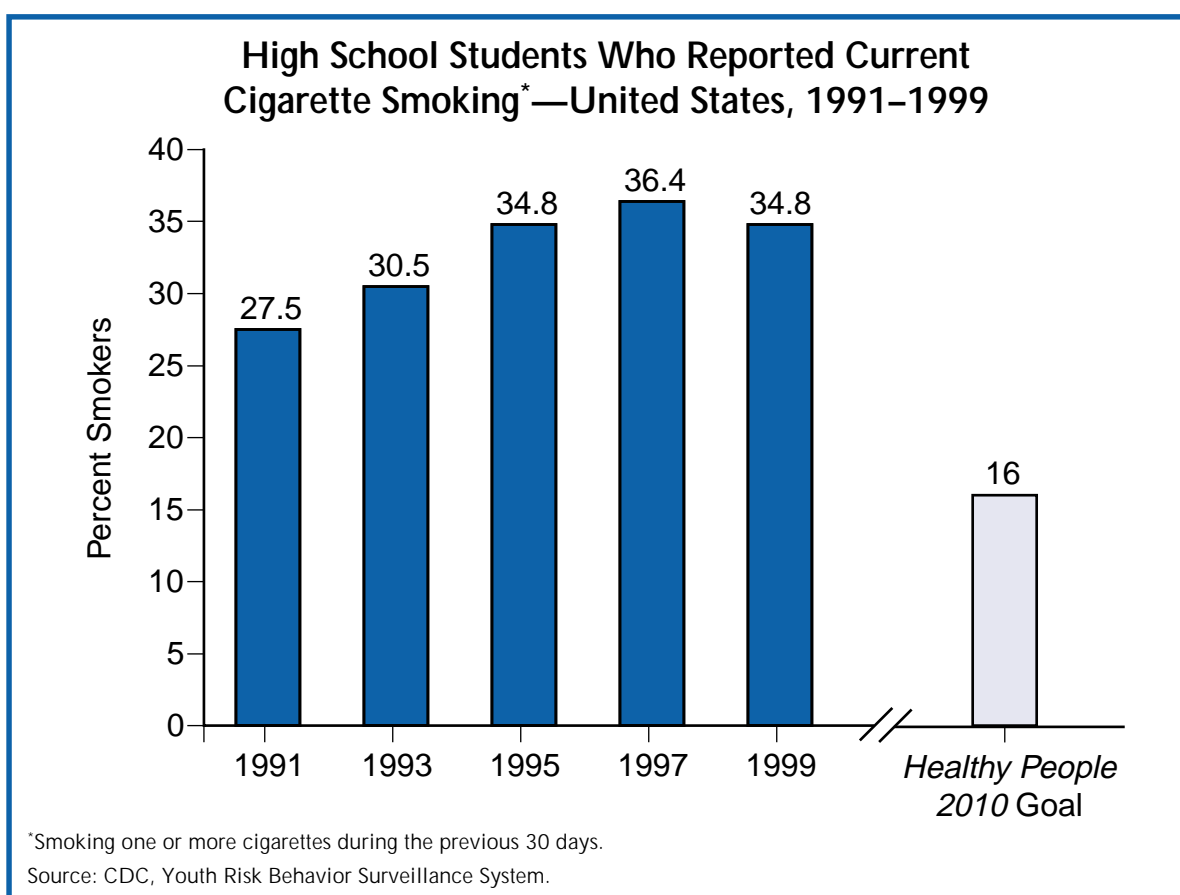


# Targeting Tobacco Use: The Nation's Leading Cause of Death 2001



*“If the recommendations in the [Surgeon General’s] report were fully implemented, the Healthy People 2010 objectives related to tobacco use could be met, including cutting in half the rates of tobacco use.”*

*David Satcher, MD, PhD  
Surgeon General*

## The Burden of Tobacco Use

An estimated 47 million adults in the United States smoke cigarettes even though this single behavior will result in death or disability for half of all regular users. Cigarette smoking is responsible for more than 430,000 deaths each year, or one in every five deaths.

Paralleling this enormous health toll is the economic burden of tobacco use: between \$50 billion and \$73 billion in medical expenditures and another \$50 billion in indirect costs.

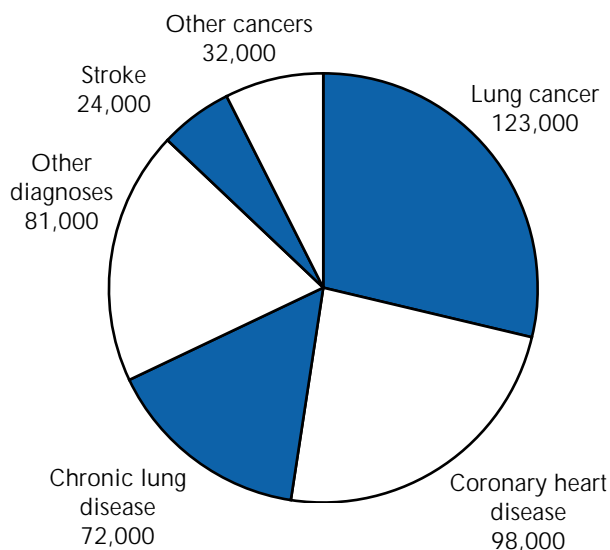
Since the release in 1964 of the first Surgeon General's report on smoking and health, the scientific knowledge about the health consequences of tobacco use has greatly increased. It is now well documented that smoking can cause chronic lung disease, coronary heart disease, and stroke, as well as cancer of the lungs, larynx, esophagus, mouth, and bladder. In addition, smoking contributes to cancer of the cervix, pancreas, and kidneys. Researchers have identified more than 40 chemicals in tobacco smoke that cause cancer in humans and animals. Smokeless tobacco and cigars also have deadly consequences, including lung, larynx, esophageal,

**S**moking-related illnesses cost the nation more than \$100 billion each year.

and oral cancer. Moreover, novel tobacco products such as bidis and clove cigarettes should not be considered safe alternatives to smoking or using smokeless tobacco.

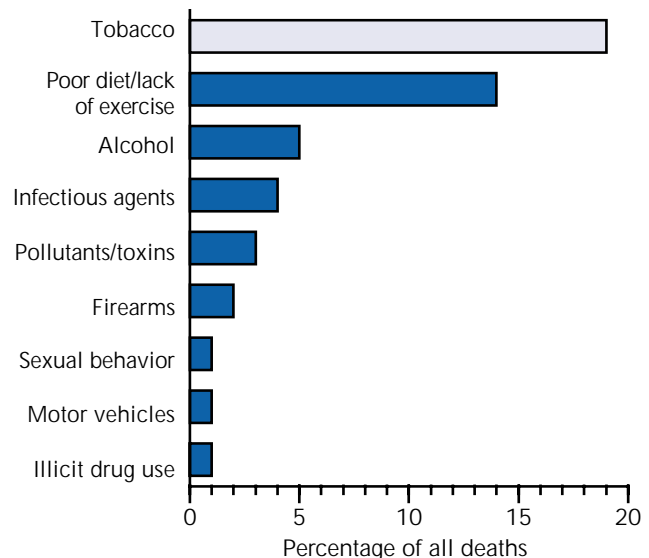
The harmful effects of smoking do not end with the smoker. Women who use tobacco during pregnancy are more likely to have adverse birth outcomes, including babies with low birth weight, which is linked with an increased risk of infant death and with a variety of infant health disorders. The health of nonsmokers is adversely affected by environmental tobacco smoke (ETS). Each year, exposure to ETS causes an estimated 3,000 nonsmoking Americans to die of lung cancer and causes up to 300,000 children to suffer from lower respiratory tract infections. Evidence also indicates that exposure to ETS increases the risk of coronary heart disease.

**430,000 U.S. Deaths Attributable Each Year to Cigarette Smoking\***



\*Average annual number of deaths, 1990–1994.  
Source: CDC, *MMWR* 1997;46:448–51.

**Actual Causes of Death, United States, 1990\***



\*The percentages used in this figure are composite approximations derived from published scientific studies that attributed deaths to these causes.

Source: McGinnis JM, Foege WH. Actual causes of death in the United States. *JAMA* 1993;270:2207–12.

## CDC's Tobacco Control Framework

With fiscal year 2001 funding of approximately \$103 million,\* the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides national leadership for a comprehensive, broad-based approach to reducing tobacco use. A broad spectrum of federal, state, and local government agencies, professional and voluntary organizations, and academic institutions have joined together to advance this comprehensive approach, which includes

- Preventing young people from starting to smoke.
- Eliminating exposure to ETS.
- Promoting quitting.
- Identifying and eliminating disparities in tobacco use among different population groups.

Essential elements of this approach include state- and community-based interventions, countermarketing, policy development, surveillance, and evaluation. These activities target groups at highest risk for using tobacco, such as young people, racial and ethnic minority groups, blue-collar workers, people with low incomes, and women.

### Building State Capacity

#### Providing Funding

With fiscal year 2001 funds, CDC provides support for preventing and controlling tobacco use in all 50 states, 7 territories, 6 tribal-serving organizations, and the District of Columbia. CDC also offers technical assistance to states on planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating tobacco control programs.

To help prevent tobacco use at its pivotal point—during adolescence—CDC provided grants to 21 states in fiscal year 2000 for coordinated school health programs that include components for preventing tobacco use. CDC's *Guidelines for School Health Programs to Prevent Tobacco Use and Addiction* sets forth school-based strategies most likely to be effective in preventing tobacco use among young people. Further guidance is offered through CDC's Research to Classrooms project, which identifies and helps disseminate successful curricula for preventing tobacco use and other health risk behaviors.

In addition to federal resources, support for a nationwide system of tobacco control is available in some states through monies from increased tobacco excise taxes, legal settlements with the tobacco industry, and grants awarded by the American Legacy Foundation.

#### Providing Guidance

To guide states in implementing effective programs, CDC has published *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs*. This book recommends strategies and state-specific funding levels for enacting comprehensive programs. State-specific guidance is also offered in *State Tobacco Control Highlights 2001*, which compiles key data on funding of state tobacco control programs, the prevalence of tobacco use, its health impact and medical costs, and economic issues related to tobacco production and sales.

#### Expanding the Science Base

To strengthen the scientific foundation for preventing and controlling tobacco use, CDC examines trends, health effects, and economic costs. For example,

- Since 1964, the Surgeon General's reports on the health consequences of tobacco use have presented comprehensive, scientific findings on such topics as tobacco use among populations at high risk and effective interventions for reducing tobacco use.
- CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR) serves as a major outlet for surveillance data and research findings on tobacco use. Topics include trends in smoking and the enactment and status of state laws on tobacco use.
- CDC's State Tobacco Activities Tracking and Evaluation (STATE) System is a state-based, comprehensive surveillance system available via the Internet that tracks legislative, programmatic, and epidemiologic data used for reporting on trends in tobacco use. CDC is collaborating with the World Health Organization, World Bank, and American Cancer Society to create a similar system to support international efforts to reduce tobacco use.
- CDC's air toxicants laboratory is developing and applying laboratory technology to further public health efforts to prevent death and disease resulting from tobacco use and ETS exposure. Specific areas of interest are tobacco additives, toxic chemicals in cigarette smoke, and biological monitoring to assess exposure to harmful substances in tobacco products.



\* This funding includes salaries and expenses as appropriated in the congressional conference report no. 106-1033.

## Communicating Information to the Public

CDC develops and distributes tobacco and health information nationwide. For example, CDC responds to more than 93,000 tobacco-related requests annually, of which 40,000 are made through the Internet. In the past year, CDC distributed more than 1.5 million publications and video products. In addition, CDC provides ready access to tobacco use prevention information and databases through its Web site. Annual visits to this site increased from 200,000 in 1998 to over 1 million in 2000.

Through the Media Campaign Resource Center, CDC continues to make available high-quality counteradvertising materials and provide technical assistance to help state and local programs conduct media campaigns to prevent tobacco use.

A continuing CDC priority is to reduce smoking among young people. Through partnerships with other federal, state, and local agencies, CDC communicates key tobacco control messages through the media, schools, and communities. Some strategies include the following:

**Promoting positive alternatives** through sports activities. For example, CDC partnered with the World Health Organization, U.S. Soccer, and FIFA to promote tobacco-free messages through a global "Smoke-Free Soccer" program.

**Empowering young people** through educational programs such as *Smoke Screeners* and *MediaSharp*, which teach media literacy skills; *SLAM!*, featuring singer/songwriter Leslie Nuchow; and *Secrets Through the Smoke*, featuring tobacco insider Jeffrey Wigand.

**Deglamorizing tobacco use** by providing technical assistance to movie and television productions and establishing partnerships with spokespeople such as cover model Christy Turlington and music group Boyz II Men.



**Educating parents** about raising their children to be tobacco free.

## Facilitating Action Through Partners

CDC works with a variety of national and international partners to ensure the participation of diverse groups in tobacco control efforts.

- CDC supports the Interagency Committee on Smoking and Health and cosponsors the annual Tobacco Use Prevention Training Institute.
- CDC is the lead agency for the 21 *Healthy People 2010* national objectives on tobacco use. Along with other agencies and organizations, CDC helps to monitor progress toward reaching these objectives.
- CDC coordinates and promotes tobacco prevention and control activities in collaboration with the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Legacy Foundation, American Lung Association, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Association of Attorneys General, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Association of Local Boards of Health, National Center for Tobacco-Free Kids, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors' Association, Pan-American Health Organization, and World Bank.
- CDC funds eight organizations representing different priority population groups to each develop a network of collaborating organizations. These networks will support a broad national strategy to prevent and reduce tobacco use.
- As the only World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Smoking and Health in the United States, CDC fosters communication between other WHO collaborating centers and regional offices, implements international studies, conducts epidemiologic research, and provides international assistance on reducing tobacco use. CDC is also helping to develop a Framework Convention on Tobacco Control that will move countries toward implementing comprehensive tobacco control strategies.

For more information or additional copies of this document, please contact the  
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